



Vermont Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Grant

**Implementing and Evaluating a Comprehensive
Public Health Approach to Suicide Prevention**

February 16, 2022

Comprehensive Suicide Prevention (CSP) Grant: Overview

- 5-year grant from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
- September 2020 – August 2025
- Grant award to Vermont Department of Health (VDH)
- Co-Managed by Health Department and Department of Mental Health



Comprehensive Suicide Prevention Grant: Funding

- Grant Staffing:
 - Grant Coordinator
 - Data Analyst
 - Communications Coordinator
- Training, consultation, incentives and staff support to develop and improve suicide prevention services and resources
- Public-facing resources and messaging to help people find support
- Comprehensive Evaluation of Grant Activities

Public Health Approach to Suicide Prevention

- Emphasis on protecting health of communities and prevention among large groups of people
- Population approach and primary prevention are critical to suicide prevention
 - People at risk often do not seek help
 - First attempts can be fatal
 - Expand beyond mental health treatment system into communities and other programs

Public Health Approach to Suicide Prevention

All Vermonters have a
roll in facing suicide.



Overarching Population

Vermont Residents 15 to 64 years of age

Populations of Focus

Males

Rural

Disability

LGBTQ

Grant Strategies



Grant Strategies

1) Expand “Gatekeeper Training”

- Expand capacity for service providers and community partners to identify, support and refer individuals who are experiencing suicidality
- Priority implementation on programs that serve populations of focus

2) Reduce access to lethal means among persons at risk

- Promote Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) and Safe Storage Messaging
- Identification and mitigation of building structures or landmarks

Grant Strategies

3) Expand Peer Supports for Individuals At-Risk

- Promote connectedness, mutual support, and help-seeking
- Develop/Expand Support Networks and Leaders among populations at risk:
 - First Responders
 - Farmers
 - Suicide Loss Survivors

4) Improve Postvention Response to Suicide Loss

- Lessen harms and prevent future risk among individual who have experienced suicide loss
- Develop and implement improved training, resources and community response to suicide death

Grant Strategies

5) Expansion of “Zero Suicide” in Healthcare Settings

- Safer suicide care through systems and organization change:
 - Comprehensive Screening and Assessment
 - Care Management
 - Clinical Treatment of suicidal thoughts and behaviors
 - Supportive Transitions Across levels of care and programs
- Focus on emergency departments and non-designated agency mental health providers

6) Increase Access to Mental Health Care via Telehealth

- Enhance expansion of tele-health to include suicide-specific support and treatment

Increase communications & awareness of suicide prevention resources across Vermont

Develop public campaigns to raise awareness and increase public involvement

Develop and Promote Support and Resources for At-Risk individuals

Create and distribute social media and marketing toolkits

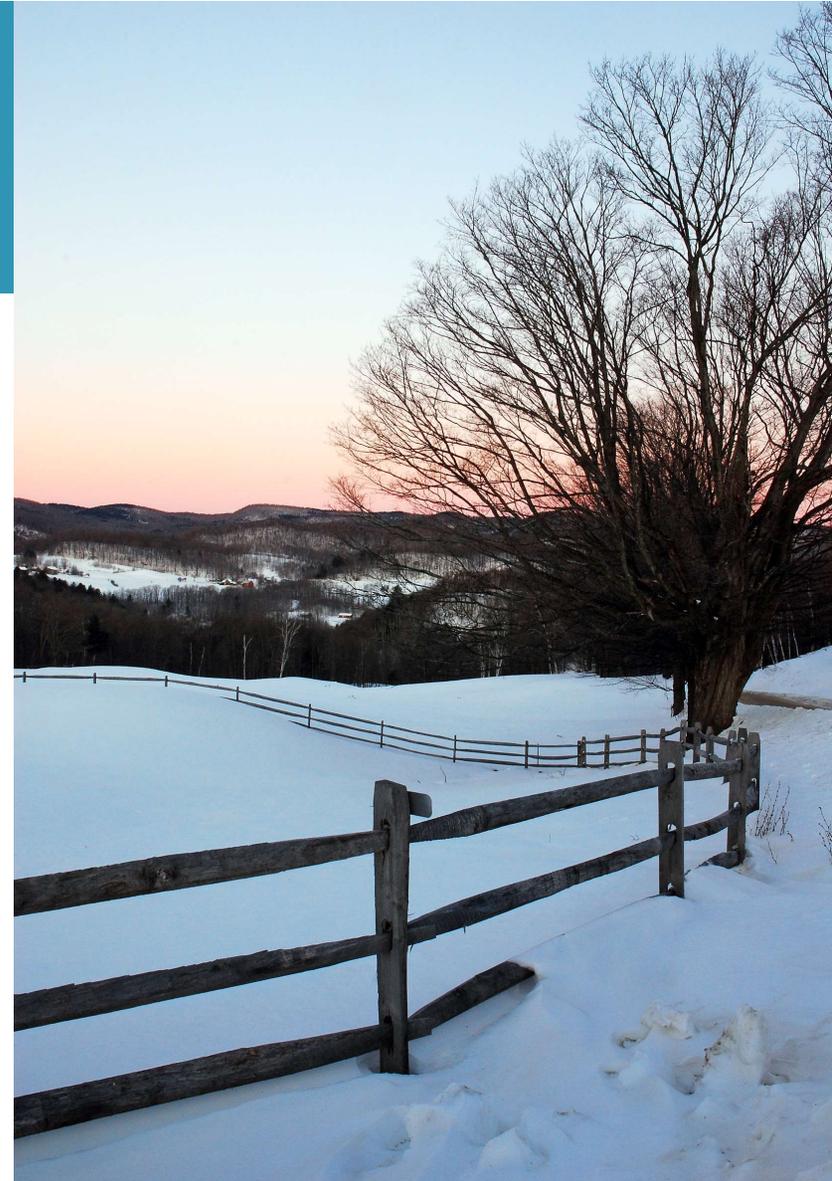
Promoting safe messaging guidance for media outlets

Promote Safe Storage

Highlight success and partner events

Year One Accomplishments

- Improved Coordination across DMH + VDH
- Enhanced data analysis to support state-level planning
- Completion of State-wide Suicide Prevention Communication and Marketing Plan
- Recruitment of Additional Programs and Funding to Support Suicide Prevention
 - Invest EAP: Peer Support Networks for First Responders and Farmers; Engagement with Employers
 - VPQHC: Zero Suicide Implementation in Emergency Departments



Comprehensive Suicide Prevention: Coordination with Partners

- Center for Health and Learning
- Vermont Suicide Prevention Center
- Vermont Suicide Prevention Coalition
- Invest EAP
- Vermont Program for Quality in Health Care
- Designated Agencies
- Blueprint for Health
- University of Vermont
- Pathways
- NAMI-VT
- Farm First
- Small Mammal Consulting
- People with Lived Experience
- Family members
- AFSP
- CSP Grant Advisory Group



Questions?

Nick Nichols, Suicide Prevention Grant
Coordinator

Nick.Nichols@vermont.gov

Phone: 802-495-8756

Web: Healthvermont.gov